

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SY-05 OMB-01 SAJ-01 OPR-02 A-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1279

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1689

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR; SP; PO

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE COUP ATTEMPT: MFA OFFICIAL
DISCUSSES SPINOLA'S PRESENCE

REF MADRID 1677

1. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS (AGUIRRE DE CARCER) HAS CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT SPINOLA, WIFE AND PARTY OF SUBORDINATE OFFICERS WHO ARRIVED YESTERDAY EVENING IN FOUR PORTUGUESE HELICOPTERS, ARE NOW CONFINED AT SPANISH AIR FORCE BASE AT TALAVERA LA REAL. AGUIRRE LEARNED FROM PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR (MENESES) THAT SPINOLA TALKED TO PORTUGUESE CONSUL AT BADAJOZ ABOUT MIDNIGHT LAST NIGHT, EXPLAINING THAT HE HAD FLED PORTUGAL BECAUSE OF THREATS TO HIS LIFE. ACCORDING TO MENESES, SPINOLA TOLD THE CONSUL HE WOULD LIKE TO COME TO MADRID SOONEST FOR DIRECT TALKS WITH PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR. AGUIRRE SAID AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH MENESES, BOTH AGREED SPINOLA SHOULD REMAIN AT TALAVERA, AND USE AS CHNNELS TO MADRID PORTUGUESE CONSUL AND SPANISH AIR FORCE COMMANDING OFFICER. SPINOLA
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AND PARTY ARRIVED BY HELICOPTER AT TALAVERA COMPLETELY

UNANNOUNCED AND THERE WAS NO OPPORTUNITY FOR PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH ANY ONE IN SPANISH GOVT, AGUIRRE NOTED.

2. AGUIRRE STATES THAT SO FAR MFA UNAWARE OF ANY REQUEST BY SPINOLA FOR ASYLUM IN BRAZIL OR ANY WHERE ELSE. HE SAID THAT SPANISH PRESS REPORTS THAT GOS HAD CONVEYED SUCH REQUEST TO BRAZILIANS WERE SPECULATION BASED ON FACT THAT NEW BRAZILIAN AMB VISITED FOREIGN MINISTER CORTINA YESTERDAY EVENING FOR PURELY PROCEDURAL REASONS. AGUIRRE NOTED THAT REUTERS IN BRAZIL IS ALSO REPORTING THAT GOB HAS RECEIVED NO REQUEST. HE COMMENTED THAT GOS WOULD BE GLAD IF SOME FRIENDLY COUNTRY WOULD OFFER SPINOLA AND PARTY ASYLUM PROMPTLY, AS HIS PRESENCE HERE WILL MAKE SPAIN'S NON-INTERVENTION POLICY MORE DIFFICULT TO SUSTAIN. GOP, HE CONTINUED, HAS STILL MADE NO REQUEST FOR RETURN OF HELICOPTERS AND ARMS, AND HE THOUGHT GOS, IN INTEREST OF GOOD RELATIONS, WOULD TAKE INITIATIVE IN OFFERING THEIR RETURN. IN PROVIDING BACKGROUND OF GOS MAR 12 COMMUNIQUE DENYING INVOLVEMENT IN PORTUGUESE EVENTS (TRANSMITTED SEPARATELY FBIS), AGUIRRE SAID STATEMENT MADE IN RESPONSE TO PRESS ACCUSATIONS AND INQUIRIES IN LISBON AND TO SUGGESTIVE COMMENTS BY SOME IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF AFM/SPANISH AMB AT LISBON (POCH) ALSO URGED PROMPT STATEMENT AS HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT PROTECTION OF EMBASSY STAFF AND PREMISES AGAINST REPORTED HOSTILE DEMONSTRATIONS.

3. BORDER SITUATION STILL UNCLEAR, AGUIRRE NOTED. INTERNATIONAL TRAIN AND AIR SERVICE HAS RESUMED. BUT PORTUGUESE STILL BLOCKING MOST OVERLAND TRAFFIC AT BORDER POINTS. STABLER

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